

HISTORY OF GOD'S ORIGINAL CHURCH – EPHESUS VS ROME

by Mario Seiglie, March 16, 2024 (Part 4)



In parts 1-3, we covered how two main and opposing churches, one true & the other false, developed in the first ten centuries.

God's small, original & persecuted Church is described as those "whom the world was not worthy" (Heb. 11:38). They are God's true heroes, of whom we are a part -- if we overcome to the end.

Let's briefly go over the first 3 parts before going on to part 4.



**Two Church Eras of Rev. 2
have come & gone
Ephesus (c. AD 31 - 100) &
Smyrna (c. AD 101 - 325)
(See Rev. 2:1-7 & 8-11)**

BLACK SEA

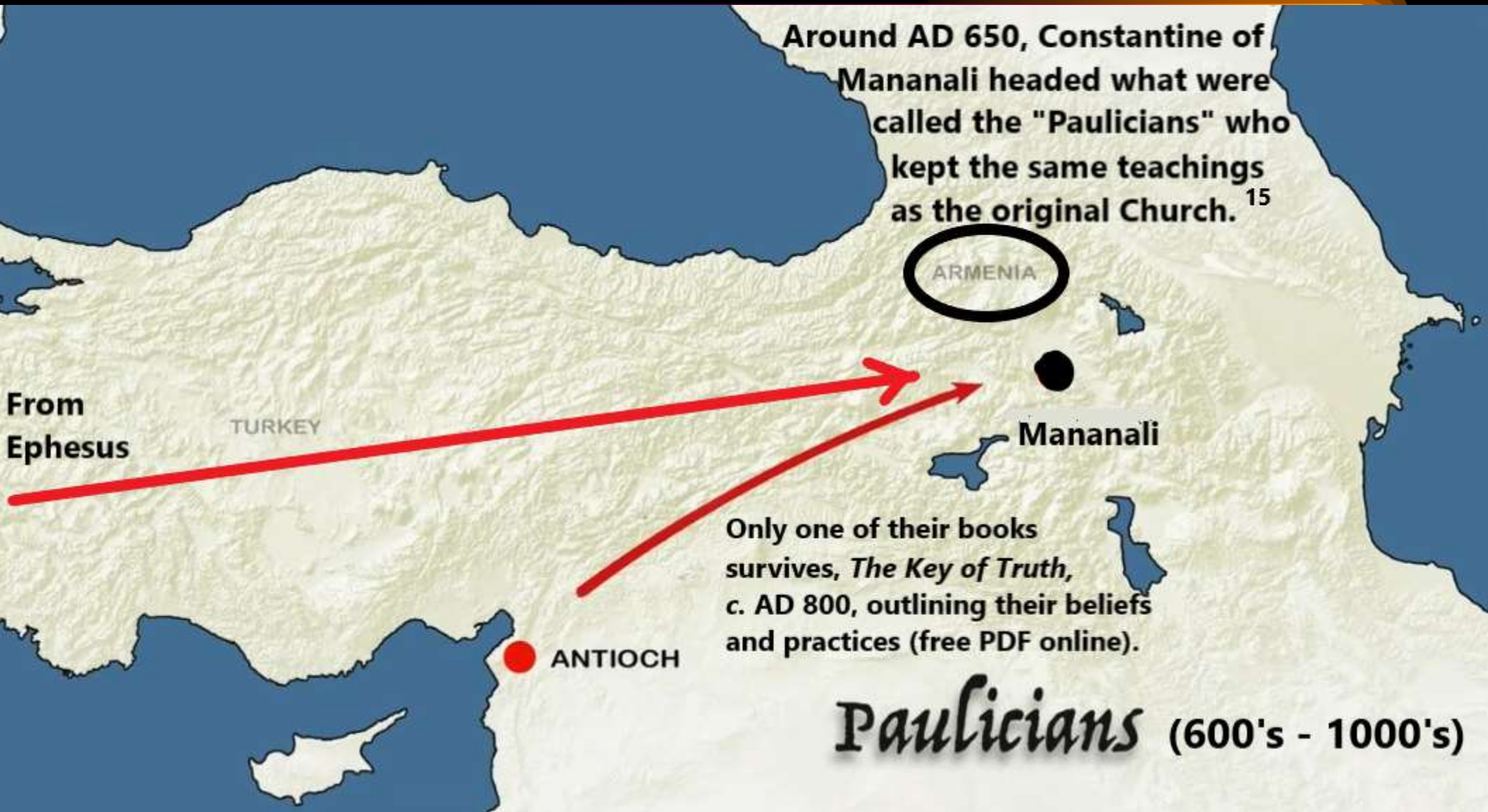
**Intense
persecution**
Church flees to
Armenia &
Northern
Europe

**Pergamos Era
begins¹⁴
(AD 325 - 1100)**

MEDITERRANEAN SEA

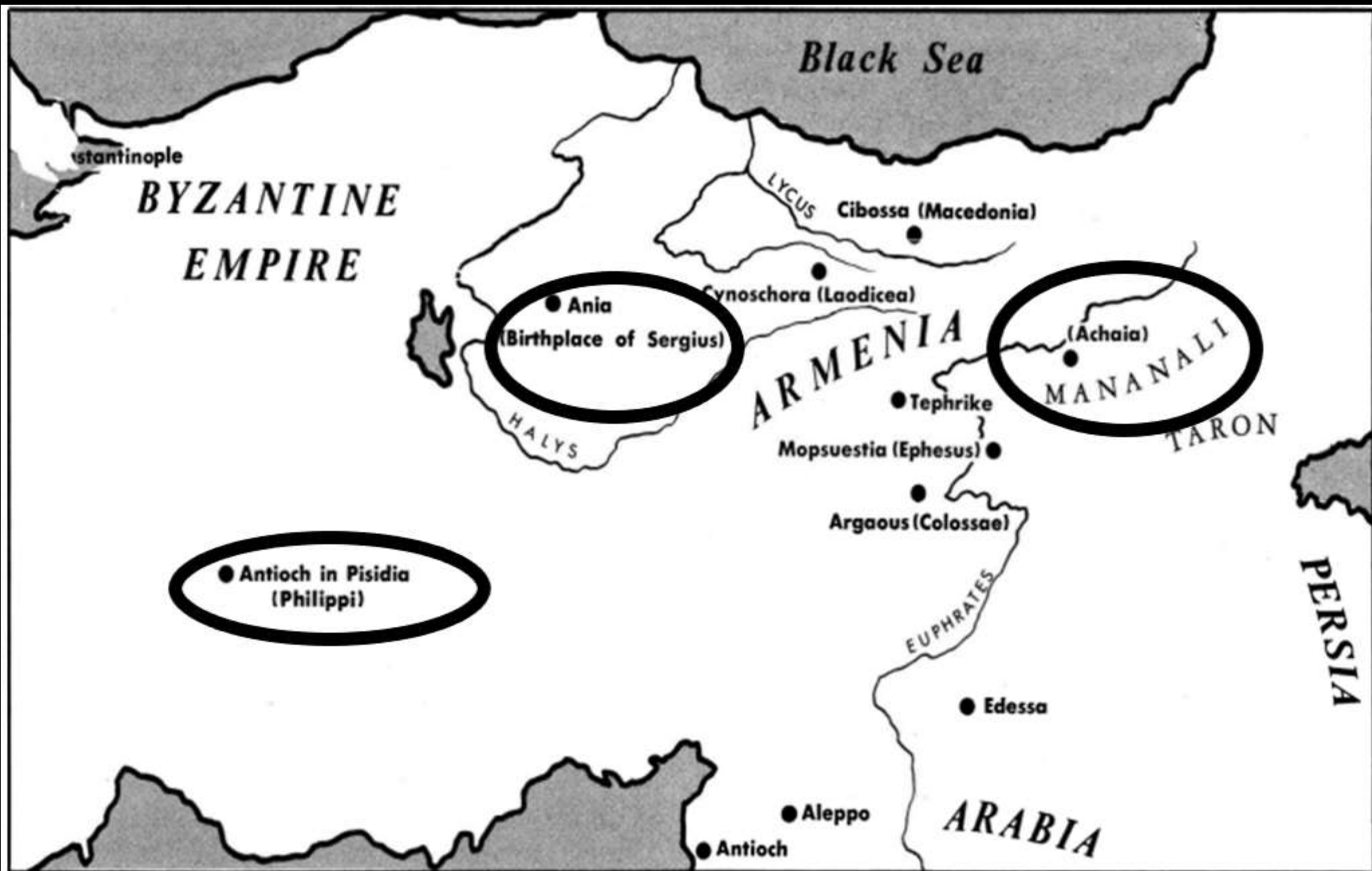
The apostasy was growing, now Emperor Constantine sided with the Catholic Church. Sunday worship was officially decreed in A.D. 321. Then in A.D. 325, the Council of Nicaea began the great persecution against the true Church. We consider this begins the 1,260 years (day for a year) in Rev. 12:6, the time of the Dark Ages for the Church (325 - 1585). After this time, Sabbath-keepers emerge again.¹³

Around AD 650, Constantine of Mananali headed what were called the "Paulicians" who kept the same teachings as the original Church.¹⁵



Only one of their books survives, *The Key of Truth*, c. AD 800, outlining their beliefs and practices (free PDF online).

Paulicians (600's - 1000's)



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Scene of Work of Pergamos Era of God's Church — now modern Turkey. Just as the congregation at Pella after A.D. 69 continued to be known as the "Jerusalem church," so congregations in Armenia were made up of those whose ancestors had fled Macedonia, Laodicea, Achaia, Ephesus, Colossae etc. as a result of Constantine's persecution.

GOD'S CHURCH IS FORCED TO MOVE INTO EUROPE

BOGOMILS
BULGARIA
THRACE

A map of the Balkan Peninsula and surrounding regions, including parts of the Middle East and the Black Sea. The landmasses are outlined in black. Red shaded areas indicate regions of persecution or migration. A red arrow points from the eastern part of the map (Anatolia/Armenia) towards the Balkans. Another red arrow points from the northern part of the map (Bulgaria) towards the Balkans. The labels 'BOGOMILS', 'BULGARIA', and 'THRACE' are placed near the northern Balkans. The label 'PAULICIANS' is placed near the eastern part of the map.

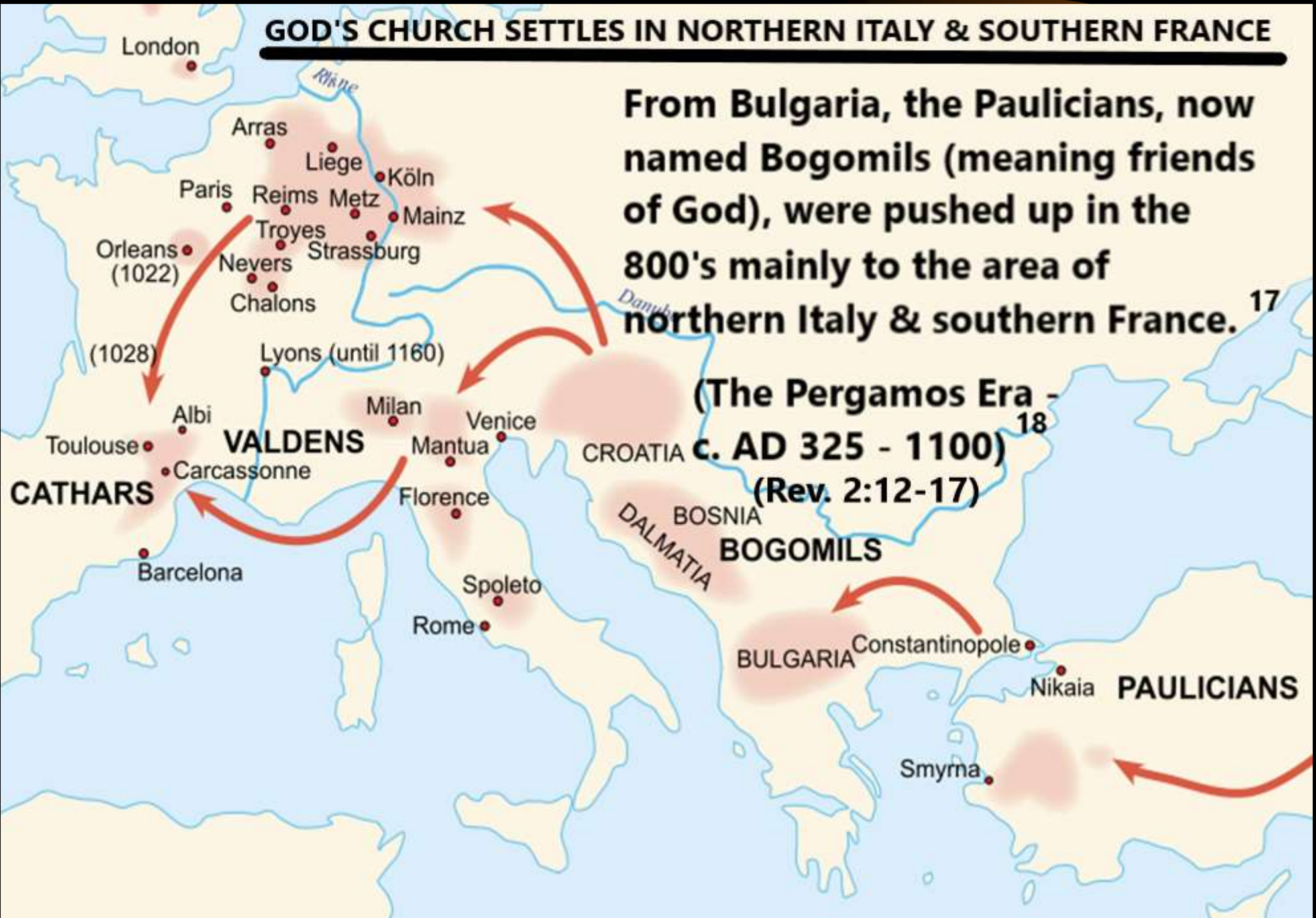
PAULICIANS

After centuries of persecutions, most Paulicians were deported from 752 to 860's. Byzantine Empress Theodora reportedly had 100,000 of them killed. The rest were sent to Thrace & Bulgaria.

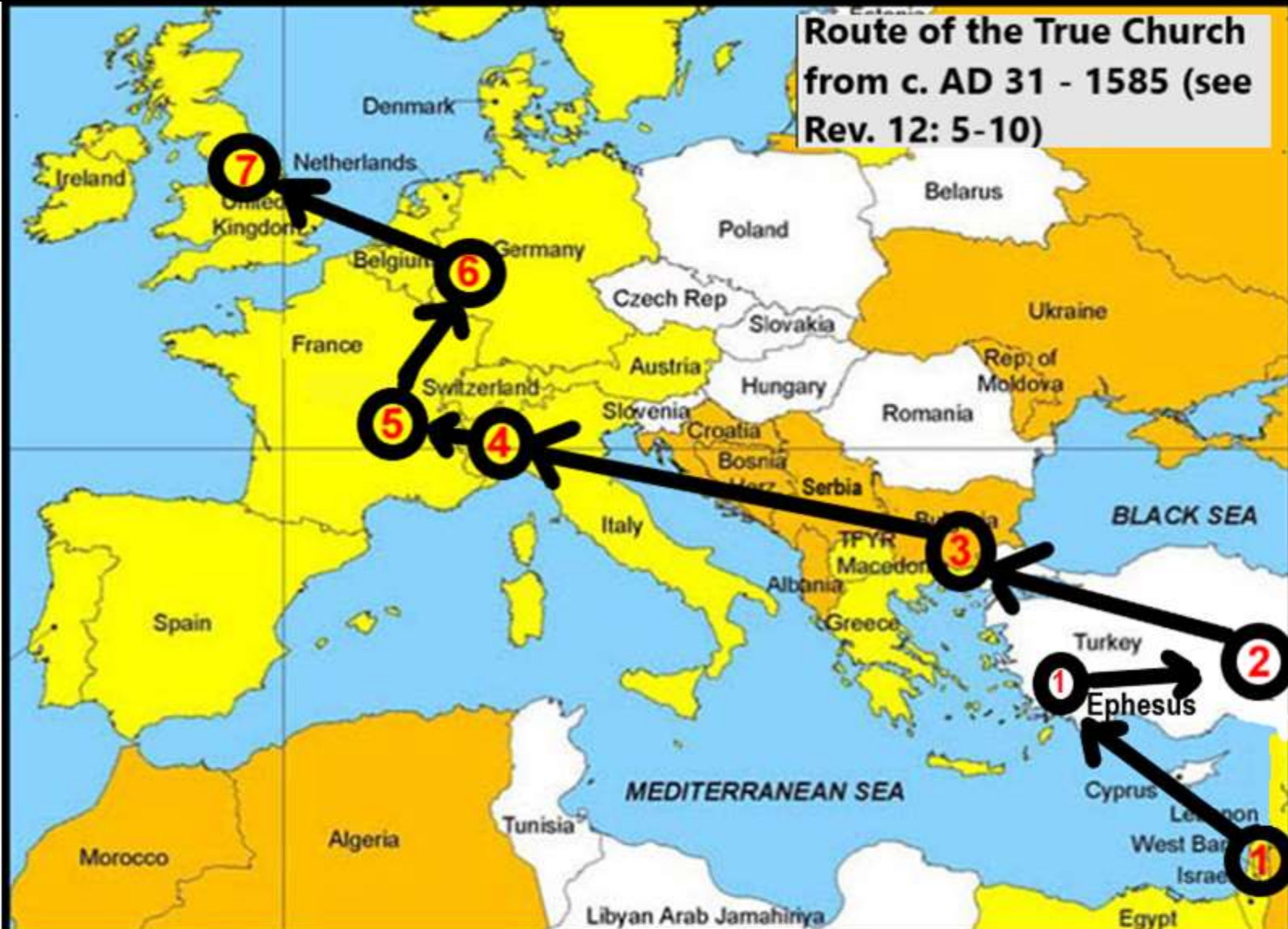
GOD'S CHURCH SETTLES IN NORTHERN ITALY & SOUTHERN FRANCE

From Bulgaria, the Paulicians, now named Bogomils (meaning friends of God), were pushed up in the 800's mainly to the area of northern Italy & southern France. 17

**(The Pergamos Era -
c. AD 325 - 1100)** 18
(Rev. 2:12-17)



**Route of the True Church
from c. AD 31 - 1585 (see
Rev. 12: 5-10)**



NAMES GIVEN TO THEM

- 1. Nazarenes
(also "Quartodecimans")
- 2. Paulicians
- 3. Bogomils

4. Pre-Waldensians

- * Petrobrusians
- * Henricians
- * Amoldists
- * Pasaginians -- (under this name, said to
- * Passagians keep Sabbath & God's Feasts)

5. Waldenses

- 6. Anabaptists
- 7. Sabbatarians

**THYATIRA ERA
(1100 - 1585)
(Rev. 2:18-29)**

We trace the Thyatira Era to the first leaders in the early 1100's - Peter de Bruys, in southeastern France, after his death, Henry of Lausanne and then Arnold of Brescia. After them, the greatest leader was Peter Waldo.¹⁹

Peter Waldo
**Peter de Bruys,
Henry and
Arnold**
Cathars

Bogolomists

Paulicans

Rev. 2:19, "I know your works, love, service, faith, and your patience; and as for your works, the last are more than the first." The last works would be of Peter Waldo.

They were known for:

- 1. Keeping the Ten Commandments**
- 2. Opposing Catholic idols & relics**
- 3. Adult baptism**
- 4. Living by God's Word**

The Spreading of the Waldenses in Europe

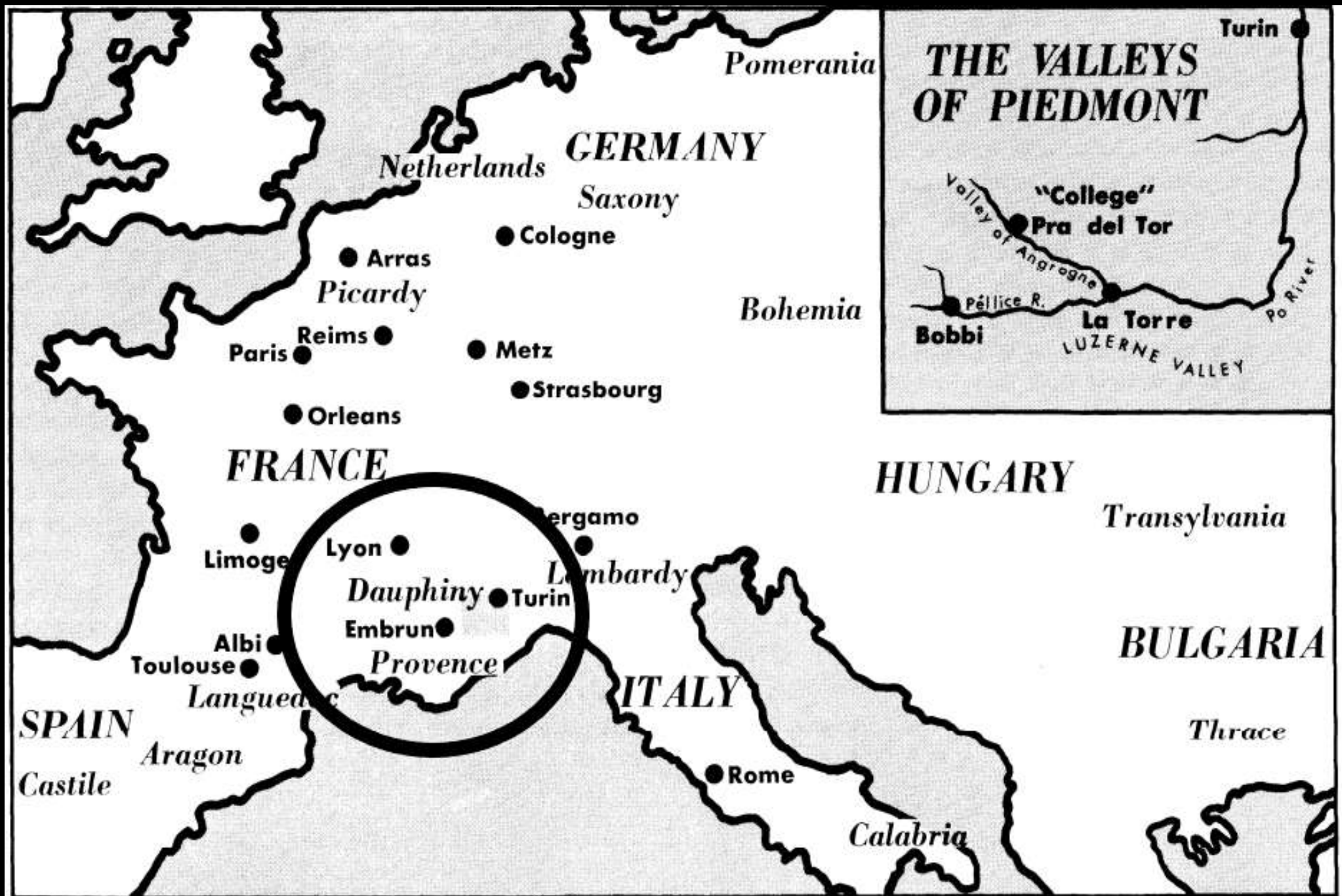


Waldensian strongholds in orange

The Expansion of the Waldensians in Europe between 1177-1532

During the Middle Ages the Waldensians constituted the most widespread non-Catholic Christian movement. From the 13th to the 15th century they were present in great parts of Western and Central Europe. At the beginning its centre was located south of the Alps, in southern France and in Lombardy but it soon moved further north.

The last persecution of Waldensians north of the Alps took place in Brandenburg in 1480. The survivors joined the Unity of Brethren in Bohemia and Moravia, a church which emerged out of Hussitism in 1458. South of the Alps the Waldensians were able to hold their own in the Cottian Alps, in Luberon and in Calabria. By the 1580's, Sabbatarians appeared in England and thrived.²⁰



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The scene of the evangelistic Work of God's Church in the Thyatira Era. Inset shows the headquarters vicinity and a part of the "Waldensian valleys." The College was located about five miles from the town of La Torre.

Other movements spread as people reacted against the moral corruption of the clergy.



The Inquisition started in 1184 by Pope Lucius III against Waldensians & Cathars in southern France. In 1208, Pope Innocent III ordered the first Crusade against them (called the Albigensian Crusade). Thousands perished. Some Waldensians (also called Lollards) fled to England.²¹ This, we believe, would begin a new Church period – the Sardis Era, with numerous Sabbath-keepers arising in Great Britain, around 1585.²²